

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
INFORMATION RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BOARD
Meeting Report

Date/Place: September 19, 2002/Department of Administration Building, Providence

Members/Representatives Present: Howard Boksenbaum, OLIS (Acting Chair); James Berard, DOC; Maggie Dziadkiewicz, OHE; Dexter Merry, Public Telecommunications Authority; Thomas Mullaney, DOA—Budget Office; Marvin Perry, DLT; Joseph Pangborn, DOE; Joan Ress Reeves, Library Board of RI; Bruce Reirden, Care New England

Members/Representatives Absent: Gary Ciminero, RI House Policy; Edward Giroux, Secretary of State's Office; Janet Levesque, RILOCAT; Nicholas Leporacci, MHRH; Raymond McKay, City of Warwick; James R. Monti, Jr., West Warwick School District; A.T. Wall, DOC; Christopher Wessells, URI; Don Wolfe, Member-at-Large

Other Attendees: Carol Ciotola (recording secretary), OLIS; Carrie Gott and Joan Gammon, NEI; Klaus O'Neal, Governor's Office

Chair's Report: Mr. Boksenbaum reported that: (1) Mr. Mullaney during his review of the Annual Report asked about the parameters for filling the Chief Information Officer's position. He felt that if the Board waits to be asked, it might not have the opportunity to provide input. Mr. Boksenbaum then asked the membership how much time and commitment they could provide to fulfill this mission.

- Mr. Mullaney noted that although there is no guaranty that the new administration would fill this position, filling leadership positions such as this one might be discussed during the transition phase.
- Mr. Boksenbaum said that the Library Board has also decided to take action on this matter. Ms. Reeves said she plans to visit both gubernatorial candidates on behalf of the Library Board; and during her meetings, she will point to the need to fill the Chief Information Officer's position.
- Mr. Boksenbaum asked members about how best to proceed. One way would be to work with the Library Board in its efforts. Ms. Reeves noted one important distinction between the Library Board and the IRMB. While the Chief Information Officer is the Chair of the IRMB, the Library Board is a more independent group with more distance, so that it looks less like a self-interest effort.
- Mr. Perry asked if the responsibilities of the Chief Information Officer should change and whether it would still make sense to have a librarian head up information services. Ms. Reeves felt that a librarian should still head up information services; further, she felt that this office should receive state department status. As Director of the Department of State Library Services, which Ms. Weaver was before merging into the Department of Administration, she was a member of the Governor's Cabinet, which is a more visible and powerful position.
- Mr. Reirden from a private-sector point of view felt that any Chief Information Officer position should be highly placed in an organization for optimal efficiency.
- Mr. Boksenbaum felt that libraries are a fit in state government with the Chief Information Officer. In the private sector, it is an important task to make information available to all employees and stockholders. In the public sector information is shared through library functions.
- Mr. Reirden asked about the options available to the Board. Mr. Mullaney responded that it depends on what candidates may know about the structure, and he was not sure if they would ask about the Chief Information Officer's position.
- Mr. Perry suggested targeting the Transition Team that will form about a week after the election.
- Mr. Boksenbaum said there are two issues on the table: (1) Decide how best to organize the information, and (2) determine whether voicing the Board's desire to have the position filled is as important as what kind of person is appointed.
- Mr. Merry asked to review the job description. Mr. Boksenbaum will make this available to the Board. Ms. Reeves also plans to distribute the Chief Information Officer's job description to the library community.

- Mr. Reirden asked if it were possible to change the position description, to which Mr. Boksenbaum replied that it was a fungible job description. He noted that although his present position is classified and, therefore, not subject to change, the Chief Information Officer's position is unclassified and could be changed. The Chief Information Officer serves at the discretion of the Director of Administration. Mr. Reirden volunteered to spearhead this project, since he himself is a Chief Information Officer. He asked that members provide comments to him by the end of the month.

Portal Review Committee Report (distributed)—Mr. Boksenbaum announced that Ms. Gott had been promoted and would be gradually leaving RI.gov to assume managerial responsibilities for the state of Maine's portal and to oversee development of the state of Vermont's portal.

Ms. Gott noted that this was a sudden change, is currently in a transition period and feels sad to leave Rhode Island and to say goodbye to a project that is so dear to her heart. She commented on her positive experience in Rhode Island and how wonderful it was to have worked with the Board in building a portal from scratch. She took inventory of this past year by noting the portal's successes, due in great part to the efforts of the state, in that portal work is accomplished through the leadership of Mr. Boksenbaum and state participation. She noted that the portal is on track and going strong with a great foundation and talented NEI staff. She said that she would be leaving this portal in the very capable hands of Joan Gammon who was introduced as her successor. She will be brought into the mix and will eventually become the General Manager of RI.gov. She comes to the portal with lots of incredible experience. She began her work at a well-established portal with a large staff, but has also worked to start up a portal and has also assisted at the Maine portal. Ms. Gott voiced her confidence in and respect for Ms. Gammon. Ms. Gott ended by noting what an honor it has been to work with the Board in establishing RI.gov, and how grateful she was for the opportunity to do this work.

Ms. Gott demonstrated two upcoming RI.gov services. The first involves enhancements made under the "Living in Rhode Island" category, whereby, this page is dynamically generated through a database, bringing together relevant information for various cities and towns in Rhode Island. Mr. Pangborn noted that as the Rhode Island Department of Education's (RIDE's) project proceeds, he would be able to enter school information into the database. Ms. Gott noted that Mr. Pangborn had spearheaded an agreement through RIDE to have RI.gov host its Web site. This work will serve as a pilot project. The second service demonstrated involved the sales and withholding tax filings process. She slated this service as a good one to evaluate the adoption rate.

- Mr. Reirden noted that his wife is an accountant and must go through this process. He said that she offered to be part of the beta testing process. Ms. Gott readily accepted and will be in contact with her as to the specifics.

Ms. Gott noted that this service would eventually include payment through an Internet Voice Response (IVR) method. During the demonstration, she also viewed a page to point to the high security that has been placed on this service. This service will also provide a filing history via an individual receipt logging process.

- Mr. Reirden asked if there is a mechanism included to provide confirmation of receipt of the user's payment. Ms. Gott will check on this and advise.

Ms. Gott took inventory of the Portal's successes to date, reviewed its beginnings, where it is now, and the challenges before it in the coming year. Thanks to the State Telecommunications Director, a PowerPoint presentation featuring RI.gov was made to the National Association of State Telecommunications Directors at its national association meeting last week. She then presented statistics to show the importance of e-government, its evolution and why the state must be a participant of the electronic age. She also pointed to RI.gov's relevancy—what it does, its services—and then spoke about the Portal's development over the past year, including its branding efforts, technology involved, e-options, privacy and security best practices, and its disaster recovery plan. She noted that during the first year the portal added \$1.5 million to state revenues because of online driver record purchases. More than 13 state agencies have expressed interest in partnering with RI.gov.

Ms. Gott mentioned that the Secretary of State is ready to use RI.gov's payment engine.

Ms. Gott referred to a handout entitled “End-User Analysis” published by the Gartner Group. She distributed this document as a point of education with respect to the evolution of e-government.

Ms. Gott commented on the *Providence Journal* article regarding Brown University’s survey with respect to state web sites. Rhode Island ranked 35th, up from last year’s 44th ranking. Political scientist Darrell West headed this survey. The complete survey report can be found at www.INSIDEPolitics.org. She also offered to circulate the full report upon request. Several members requested copies. She also contacted Mr. West to introduce herself and RI.gov and to invite him to a Board meeting to learn about his vision on e-government. She received a response from him stating that Rhode Island is doing a great job and that there has been tremendous improvement over the last year. He also accepted her invitation to attend a Board meeting. She’ll make arrangements to have him speak at the next meeting. Once the Board finishes its work, it would then proceed with his presentation. She’ll also invite Webmakers from state agencies to attend.

- Mr. Boksenbaum also hoped to learn from Mr. West what criteria he used, what state URL(s) he visited for the survey, and what changed to cause Rhode Island’s ranking to go up. Ms. Gott noted that Mr. West’s survey is all about agencies and looking for certain information on a web site.

Old Business—Annual Report: Final Considerations—Mr. Boksenbaum noted that at the end of this year it would be time to update the Five-Year Plan. He will present suggestions at the next Board meeting as to how best to proceed and asked whether information should be gathered for the new administration.

- Mr. Perry asked if five years was too long a span. Mr. Boksenbaum noted that while the Five-Year Plan is legislatively mandated, it should be updated every year. It is also important to anticipate what is “coming down the tracks,” but there are not enough resources to perform such a task. He cited the need to address how best to increase this plan’s effectiveness.

New Business—None

Next Meeting—Thursday, October 24, 2002, Conference Room “A” (2d floor) of the DOA Building